

Missouri

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November 4, 2005

HEADLINE NEWS

Missouri Metro Areas See Significant Job Increases in September



With Missouri's unemployment rate at its lowest level in four years, employment (unadjusted) in September increased in the state's seven metropolitan areas. Employment increased by 11,200 jobs in St. Louis; 8,700 jobs in Kansas City; 3,300 in Springfield; 2,100 in Columbia; 1,800 in Joplin; 700 in Jefferson City; and 300 jobs in St. Joseph.

Columbia had the lowest unemployment rate among metropolitan areas at 3 percent while Kansas City topped the list at 5.1 percent. Unemployment was 3.5 percent in Jefferson City, 4.1 percent in Joplin, 4.7 percent in St. Joseph, 4.8 percent in St. Louis and 3.6 percent in Springfield. [Read more...](#)

Missouri: A Logical Location for Logistics

Expansion Management and *Logistics Today* magazines recently released their 2005 Top 50 Logistics-Friendly Metros in the United States rankings. St. Louis ranked No. 6 nationally, but had the top ranked transportation and distribution industry workforce. Kansas City was ranked as the ninth most logically-friendly city. [Read more...](#)



Midwest Small Business Owners Plan Hiring Increases



Owners of small businesses in the Midwest have plans to increase hiring over the next year, according to the National City Small Business Index. However, these small business owners reported lower confidence in October, primarily because of automotive industry challenges, as well as the effects of high energy prices and the hurricanes. Over the past month in Missouri, the hiring index rose from 62.1 percent to 65 percent, while overall business confidence fell from 87.1 percent to 83.3 percent. [Read more...](#)

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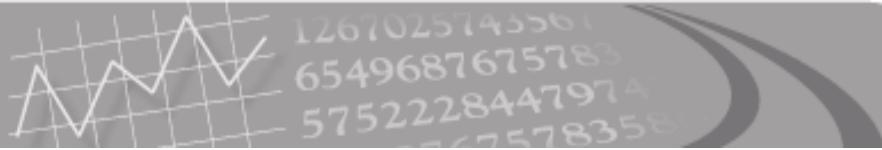
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New Look to MERIC Website

The MERIC website has a new look! MERIC has reorganized its website in an effort to better serve our customers and better present the wide variety of information MERIC has to offer. Changes include new sections for MERIC's primary customer groups and several new data applications. [Read more...](#)



Teaching Your Child About Money



Why teach your child about money? Because the financial lessons you impart to your child today about managing an allowance, opening and maintaining a bank account and becoming a smarter consumer will serve her or him well throughout life - and, hopefully, help the whole family avoid mall meltdowns. This is the first of a multi-part MERIC series on helping you and your children better manage money. [Read more...](#)

[Military Preparedness and Enhancement](#)
[Commission Completes Work on Annual Report](#)

[Blunt, Steelman Pleased with Decision to Delay Closing of Federal Mapping Center in Rolla](#)

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State Approves \$1.7M for Water, Sewer Projects

The city of Parma and Washington Co. each received approval for \$500,000 CDBG water grants this week. Parma will construct a new water treatment system and Washington Co. will construct a new centralized water system for county residents, including the unincorporated community of Belgrade.

Schell City received a \$276,000 CDBG water grant to upgrade its current public water system. Newburg received a \$418,040 CDBG wastewater grant that will connect approximately 53 households to the city's centralized sewer system.



SEMO, DWD Team Up to Ready Students for Job Market

Southeast Missouri State University and the Division of Workforce Development are teaming up to help better prepare students to enter the job market. The university has implemented a new program this fall called "Transitions," which requires students to meet certain career proficiency requirements. One of the program's steps is to complete a personal profile on GreatHires.org - the state's comprehensive job-matching database, which can help students find both internship and job opportunities. In addition, four DWD career counselors now work on campus to assist students.



Continental Products to Expand in Mexico

DED has approved a \$148,183 CDBG industrial infrastructure grant for the city of Mexico to assist Continental Products with a \$1.3 million, 17-job expansion of its Mexico facility. The grant will help fund storm water drainage improvements to ease flooding at and around the expansion site. [Read more...](#)

Aaron's Automotive Adds Production Line, Workers

A new production line at Aaron's Automotive in Springfield will add 30 employees and increase efficiency by 10 percent. Aaron's \$2 million investment will allow the company to manufacture

[Read more...](#)

State to Host Volunteer Program Workshops

The Missouri Community Service Commission and other state agencies will host workshops in Jefferson City, Kansas City, Sikeston and St. Louis to inform non-profit, faith-based and school-based organizations how they can participate in federal and state administered community service programs. There is no cost to attend these workshops, but registration is required. For more information, call (877) 210-7611 or e-mail [Kevin Edwards](#). [Read more...](#)

[Read more...](#)

State Helps PPO*USA Workers

DED is activating its Rapid Response Team next week to help employees who will be affected by the upcoming closure of PPO*USA, Inc. a medical claims services processing center in Lee's Summit. A meeting will be held at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at the company's facility, to inform affected employees about services available to help them find a new job. The company will close its Lee's Summit facility by Dec. 1 due to the recent loss of a claim services agreement. [Read more...](#)

transmissions used in medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and helped snag a new customer, Indianapolis-based Allison Transmissions. [Read more...](#)

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Questions or Comments?
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GLOBAL NEWS

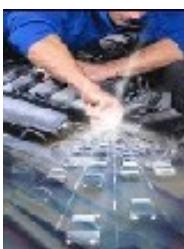
Australia to Open Trade Office in KC



The Australia government officially opened a trade office in Kansas City last week that will facilitate increased trade between the country and the Midwest. The office will foster business relationships between U.S. and Australian companies, with a specific focus on agribusiness.

Angela Lowrey, spokeswoman for Austrade at the Australian Embassy in Washington, said "We've identified Kansas City and the American heartland as an area to partner." [Read more...](#)

Automotive Companies Drawn to Poland



Poland is a land of opportunity and a land of assistance for automotive investors. The nation is home to low labor costs, a favorable transport infrastructure, a large number of suppliers, qualified labor and investment incentives. Poland's 17 Special Economic Zones (SEZs), offering corporate income tax exemption, admissible state aid, and two forms of regional aid, were created to encourage regional development. [Read more...](#)

Biotech Fever: Is it a Disease or a Cure-All?



Kent Hoover, chief of the American City Business Journals' Washington, D.C. Bureau writes about the "economic development community's current obsession with biotechnology." Today, 41 states are chasing the biotech rainbow as a way to grow their economies. Many states and

regions are investing millions of dollars in incentive packages or research and development facilities to recruit biotech industry companies and organizations. Nevertheless, the industry still remains highly concentrated in only a select few of the nation's regions. [Read more...](#)



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November 11, 2005

HEADLINE NEWS

Missouri Business Conditions Improved in September



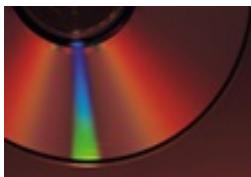
The September Business Conditions Index in Missouri rose to its highest level since March of this year despite the effects the gulf coast hurricanes have had on inflation and consumer confidence. The index rose to 59.8 from 58.0 in August as business services firms and transportation equipment manufacturers reported expanding business conditions. [Read more...](#)

Missouri's Revenue Collections Rise Again in October

Missouri general revenue collections rose from \$444 million in October 2004 to \$499 million this October, representing a 12.5 percent increase. Corporate income and corporate franchise tax collections increased by 56.9 percent over the month and are up by 50.1 percent over the year. However, higher fuel and gas prices are expected to create higher operational costs for businesses and dampen consumer spending, which may impact overall revenue collections during the winter months. [Read more...](#)



Missouri Chamber Offers DVD on Workers' Comp Changes



As a strong proponent of legislative changes to Missouri's workers' compensation system, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry is now offering an educational resource to inform employers of the new law. A seminar regarding the recent reform and how employers can make the most of it is available in DVD format for \$79 from the Missouri Chamber Education Foundation. The package price includes a binder with presentation handouts and access to a hotline established to keep you up-to-date on any recent actions affecting the new laws. For more information, e-mail [Daisy Olivo](#) or call (573) 634-3511.

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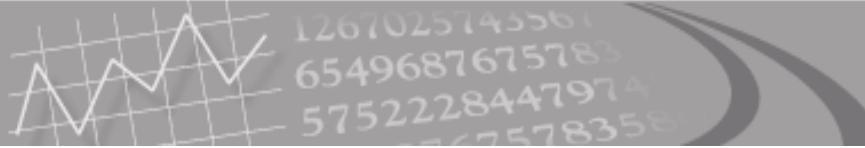
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[Missouri Metro Areas See Significant Job Increases in September](#)

[Committee Selects 2006 Missouri Arts Awards](#)

**Number of Missouri Businesses Grows in 1Q05**

There was an average of 160,564 private establishments employing nearly 2.2 million people in Missouri during the first quarter of 2005. This was an increase from 158,084 private establishments with 2,151,881 employees in the first quarter of 2004. The number of establishments and employees grew across most business size classes over the year. [Read more...](#)

Teaching Your Teen About Money

Teenagers are not always successful in managing their money, or even accepting advice on how to do so. In the second of a three-part series on helping you and your children better manage money, MERIC discusses how parents can help equip teenagers with the correct tools to successfully manage their finances as they embark on their own lives. [Read more...](#)

FOCUS ON COMMUNITY**Monroe City Receives State Water Grant**

DED granted approval of Monroe City's application for a \$300,000 CDBG water grant. The funds will be used to replace old water distribution lines installed in the early and mid-1900s. The city will install new water lines and water main, which will benefit 147 households throughout the city. [Read more...](#)

Carrollton Arts Organization Gets State Tax Credits

DED approved up to \$246,500 in NAP tax credits for the Carrollton Area Center For The Arts. The tax credits are expected to leverage \$493,000 in donations that will fund revitalization of a

FOCUS ON WORKFORCE**MCC Gets Federal Training Grant**

The Metropolitan Community College's Business & Technology College has received a \$1.97 million grant from the President's Community Based Job Training Initiative. The funds will be used to develop curriculum, hire instructors and cover some student tuition costs for the college's new Making It in KC training program. The course will be designed to better prepare Kansas City-area workers for entry level manufacturing jobs. [Read more...](#)

DWD Staff Learns About New Assistance for Former Inmates

Some Division of Workforce Development

FOCUS ON BUSINESS**Bond, Talent Secure \$20M for Life Sciences**

U.S. Sens. Kit Bond and Jim Talent have secured more than \$20 million in federal funds for Missouri life science projects. The federal appropriations will help fund a number of high-priority agriculture projects in the state, including \$3.75 million to construct a new National Plant Genetics and Security Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and \$740,000 for the Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis. [Read more...](#)

Private Equity Firm Launches Small Business Fund

The Advantage Capital Community Development Fund has closed on a \$14 million round as part of a

Recipients**October 2005 Missouri Focus Issues****September 2005 Missouri Focus Issues****QUICK LINKS****Dept. of Economic Development (DED)****State of Missouri****Missouri LocationOne****GreatHires.org****Missouri Training and Employment Council (MTEC)****MERIC****Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC)****Missouri Arts Council****Missouri Economic Development Council (MEDC)****Missouri Enterprise Business Assistance Center****Missouri General Assembly****Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

historic movie theatre and two adjacent buildings located downtown, which will house community activities and events. [Read more...](#)

State Tax Credits Approved for Empire Theater Project

Kansas City's Empire Theater, built in 1921, will be rehabilitated within the Kansas City Live! downtown improvement project with help from state tax credits. The Department of Economic Development approved up to \$938,538 through the Brownfield Redevelopment Program for the project at 1400 Main St. to help offset costs involved in the cleanup of asbestos at the site. The theater will eventually create 106 new jobs after it is converted into a state-of-the-art movie theater with six digital projection screens, sky boxes and seating for 1,100 people as well as a concession stand, bar and restaurant. [Read more...](#)

staff took part in the inaugural Missouri Offender Workforce Summit held November 8-9 in St. Louis. The summit provided an opportunity to hear about the innovative and effective programs being developed to assist individuals being released from Missouri's correctional facilities. Currently, DWD provides information and assistance to ex-offenders through Career Centers statewide.

Lexington Career Center Hosts Women's Health Seminar

The Missouri Career Center in Lexington celebrated Breast Cancer Awareness Month by hosting an informational seminar on cancer awareness and women's health issues on October 20. There were several speakers in attendance, including cancer survivor Sharon Shade R.N., MA of Mobile Wellness Inc., and several women shared personal experiences.

\$30 million-plus small business finance fund targeted to companies and entrepreneurs in low-income communities in the St. Louis area. Most of the fund will be directed to St. Louis businesses through loans ranging from \$250,000 to \$2 million for working capital, expansion capital and money for tenant improvements. [Read more...](#)

\$78M Ammo Order for Independence Firm

Alliant Techsystems Inc.'s Alliant Lake City Small Caliber Ammunition Co. LLC in Independence will be filling \$78 million in orders for ammunition received from the U.S. military. Alliant Techsystems has more than tripled its small-caliber ammunition production capacity from 350 million rounds a year to 1.2 billion rounds a year and plans to expand capacity again to 1.5 billion rounds a year by March. [Read more...](#)



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GLOBAL NEWS

Massachusetts \$473 Million Economic Development Plan



A new \$473 million economic development plan - part of the Commonwealth Investment Plan proposed by the Senate Ways and Means Committee - will target development and infrastructure, life sciences and technology, workforce development and training and tourism and cultural initiatives. The measure will also reform permitting, providing grants and technical assistance to help cities and towns develop properties that qualify for fast track commercial and industrial permitting.

[Read more...](#)

FedEx Opens \$70M Hub in Maryland

FedEx Ground has opened a new \$70 million, 325,000-square-foot distribution center in Hagerstown, Md. The new hub will process up to 22,500 packages per hour and will employ 400. FedEx Ground recently opened hubs in Cincinnati and Dallas and is constructing another new hub in Memphis. [Read more...](#)



Fuel Costs Threaten Employee Retention



According to a recent survey by Manpower Inc., rising costs at the pump are taking a toll on workers throughout the United States. More than two-thirds of the 1,300 survey participants indicated that rising gasoline prices are affecting their ability to get to work. Melanie Holmes, senior vice president for Manpower Inc., said "This is a red flag to employers. Clearly, the price at the pump is the newest threat to employee retention." [Read more...](#)

Missouri

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November 18, 2005

HEADLINE NEWS

Unemployment Remains Relatively Unchanged in October



Missouri's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose slightly in October to 5.0 percent, which is eight-tenths of a point below the October 2004 rate and still among the lowest unemployment rates on record since 2001.

Although Missouri non-farm payroll employment dipped by 4,700 jobs, on a seasonally adjusted basis, unemployment claims decreased in October - an indication that underlying employment is not decreasing. Since January, more than 33,000 new jobs have been created in Missouri. [Read more...](#)

Blunt, Sebelius Endorse OneKC Campaign

Gov. Matt Blunt and Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius recently endorsed the OneKC campaign, an economic development plan that promotes the bi-state greater Kansas City area as one unified region. The campaign aims to attract business opportunities and new jobs to the region by promoting the business economic incentives of both states and the 18 counties and 50 communities that make up the area. [Read more...](#)



Saving for Retirement and a Child's Education



You'd love to retire from the rat race some day. You also have a child - or two, or more! - to put through college. How to accomplish both? MERIC offers some tips in the final of its three-part series on helping you and your children manage money. [Read more...](#)

Profiling Missouri Communities: Springfield

Springfield is Missouri's third largest city with a population of 150,704. The Springfield area has been one of the fastest growing regions in the state in recent years, and this growth will likely continue into the future. The Springfield MSA is projected to have population growth of 22 percent by 2025, faster than the 9.2

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percent projected growth for Missouri. [Read more...](#)



Butler Tops Community Betterment Awards

The city of Butler won the Grand Prize at the Missouri Community Betterment (MCB) conference in Columbia. Butler was selected for its community involvement and ability to prioritize and get projects done. The cities of Annapolis, Grant City, Butler, Salem and Pleasant Hill were tops in their population categories. Altogether 25 communities and 12 individuals were honored. [Read more...](#)

Missouri Arts Awards Recipients Selected

The Missouri Arts Council announced that four individuals and one art institution have been selected to receive 2006 Missouri Arts Awards - the state's highest honor in the arts. The awards will officially be presented by Gov. Matt Blunt and First Lady Melanie Blunt at a ceremony on February 8th at the Capital Rotunda in Jefferson City. [Read more...](#)

Cape Chamber Receives Double Honors

The Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce was named the 2005 Chamber of the Year by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry and



Missouri Joins Federal Program to Assist Veterans

The Division of Workforce Development has agreed to participate in the nationwide ``Key To Career Success'' campaign, which was launched on Veteran's Day. The program, initiated by the U.S. Labor Department and Defense Department, is designed to heighten veterans' awareness of the services available at career centers across the nation including 41 in Missouri. Those leaving military service are receiving Key to Career Success cards and other promotional materials referring them to career centers in Missouri and elsewhere for assistance in making the transition to civilian life and employment. [Read more...](#)

State Assists Dislocated Workers

The state's Rapid Response Team was activated twice this week to assist employees who will be laid off from the MetLife Group Inc. in St. Louis and Industrial Wire Products in Sullivan. The team provides dislocated workers with re-employment services, which may include tuition assistance for vocational



DED Partners with Joplin on Innovation Center

DED has allocated \$125,275 to help fund the Joseph Newman Business and Technology Innovation Center in Joplin. The department and the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation are working cooperatively to provide services to early-stage entrepreneurs as they develop promising advanced-technologies and create quality jobs. [Read more...](#)

Talent, Lieberman Bill to Assist Boeing

An amendment passed last week by the U.S. Senate would keep open Boeing's C-17 Globemaster III production line in St. Louis. The amendment, sponsored by U.S. Sens. Jim Talent and Joe Lieberman, authorizes a contract for up to 42 new C-17 transport aircraft and keeps production lines open until further analysis of the military's need. Boeing's C-17 line employs about 1,800 Missouri workers and generates \$776 million in economic activity. [Read more...](#)

\$7.4M Military Contract for K.C. Company

Jianas Brothers Packaging Co. has been awarded a \$7.4 million contract from the U.S. Defense Logistics

Web Site Offers Guidance to Missouri Businesses on Disaster Planning

[Blunt Says Carrollton Area Center For The Arts Will Receive State Tax Credits](#)

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recently received four-star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for meeting minimum standards in its operations and programs. [Read more...](#)

training or classroom education at no charge to the affected employer or employee. For more information, go to [Rapid Response](#).

Agency. The small Kansas City-based business will provide beverage mixes to the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. [Read more...](#)

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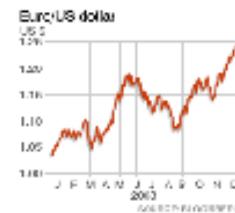
Hino Selects Marion, Ark. for Assembly Plant



Hino Motors Ltd. will build a new auto assembly plant in Marion, Ark., which will produce 3,000 to 4,000 trucks a year and may be expanded in the future. The company's existing facility in Marion will begin producing rear and front axles for Toyota's redesigned Tundra pickups next year. [Read more...](#)

Dollar Climbs to 18-month High Against Euro

The U.S. dollar climbed against major European currencies last week to hit an 18-month high against the euro. The prospect of higher U.S. interest rates continues to attract yield-hungry investors. Meanwhile, the Fed raised interest rates for the 12th straight meeting, taking its key rate to 4 percent, and suggested it would keep raising at a measured pace. [Read more...](#)



U.S.-China Strike Tentative Textile Deal



A tentative deal has been reached between the United States and China that would limit Chinese textile and apparel imports for the next three years. Under the agreement, China would be allowed to increase the volume of products it exports to the United States in 34 categories, but they would be subject to annual limits. The U.S. can exercise its rights to cap shipments at 7.5 percent annual growth through "safeguard quotas." [Read more...](#)

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Missouri

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November 25, 2005

HEADLINE NEWS

Incentives Review Committee Issues Report Designed to Improve Programs



A DED Incentives Review Committee has given final approval to a series of recommendations on state and local incentives and forwarded them to Gov. Matt Blunt, who directed the department in April to evaluate the programs to determine their effectiveness, efficiency, fairness and economic impact.

The committee evaluated 62 existing state and local incentive programs, all of which are either administered by the department or are directly related to the department's community and economic development activities. The report provides an overview of each program, recommended actions and explanations for each recommendation. The committee's suggestions may be used in the crafting of legislation that will address changes in Missouri's incentives programs. The final report will be available on the Department of Economic Development's web site at www.ded.mo.gov.

Missouri's Exports Continue to Outpace Last Year's Record Pace

Missouri exports through the third quarter of 2005 are more than \$800 million ahead of the record \$9 billion in global sales set in 2004, according to the Missouri Department of Economic Development. Through the end of September, Missouri exports totaled \$7.5 billion compared to \$6.7 billion after the third quarter of 2004, a nearly 12 percent increase. [Read more...](#)



Blunt Touts Missouri's New Economic Climate to Japanese Business Leaders



Gov. Matt Blunt attended the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry's annual dinner this week in New York City. There he met with industry leaders to promote the many advantages of doing business in Missouri and further cement the state's relationship with Japan, the state's third leading export market behind Canada and Mexico. [Read more...](#)

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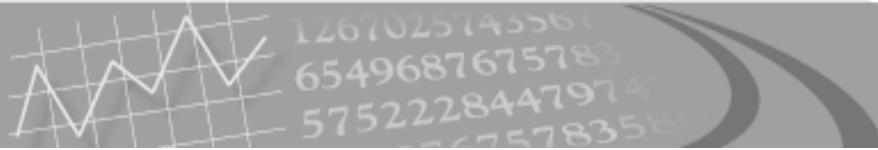
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Holiday Forecasts Look for Stable Shopping Season



Retail sales during the winter holiday period represent an important measure of economic activity. They are significant to the trade sector as many retailers depend on these sales for a substantial portion of their annual income. Sales tax revenue generated by these sales is also important to state and local governments. Forecasts for the 2005 holiday shopping season call for a 3.0 to 6.0 percent increase from last year's spending. [Read more...](#)

Missouri Per Capita Income Growth Highest Since 2000

Revised personal income data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis show that per capita personal income in Missouri increased by 4.5% in 2004 to \$30,516. This was Missouri's largest annual per capita increase since 2000. Nationally, per capita income increased 4.9% to an average of \$33,041. [Read more...](#)



FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

Missourians Answer Call to Service Again

Missouri ranked 10th in the number of registered projects for the 15th annual Make a Difference Day on October 22. Volunteers throughout the state participated in a total of 37 registered projects in 24 Missouri communities. Projects ranged from food drives and hurricane relief efforts to neighborhood cleanup efforts and a day of family fun and fundraising for a new fire truck for the city of Breckenridge. [Read more...](#)

AmeriCorps and Boeing Clear North Riverfront Trail

A team of volunteers from Boeing, Trailnet and Grace Hill Trail Rangers spent

FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

GM Announces Major Reduction in Manufacturing Jobs

Earlier this week General Motors announced it would cut 30,000 manufacturing jobs between 2005 and 2008, close several plants and eliminate shifts at others in an effort to return to profitability. In the Show Me State, the Wentzville assembly plant will not be affected, but GM plans to convert its St. Louis parts distribution center to a collision center next year. [Read more...](#)

State Gets \$1.2M Grant for Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative

The U.S. Department of Labor approved grants totaling more than \$1.2 million for two Prisoner Re-

FOCUS ON BUSINESS

Missouri Businesses Save \$50M in Taxes

The U.S. Department of Labor recently approved a request from Gov. Matt Blunt that gives the state a reprieve and saves Missouri businesses \$50 million in federal taxes. Small business owners and employers were in jeopardy of losing tax credits because Missouri owed \$288 million from federal loans the state received to cover unemployment claims beginning in 2003. [Read more...](#)

Washington University Receives \$29.5M Grant

Washington University School of Medicine's Genome Sequencing Center has received a \$29.5 million federal grant

[Missouri Unemployment Remained Relatively Unchanged in October](#)

[Department Announces Partnership with Joplin on New Innovation Center](#)

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time last month clearing brush and cleaning up a 100-yard area along the Riverfront Trail in St. Louis, a biking and hiking course, to open a 'bio-window,' or clear view of the Mississippi River. The effort is the beginning stage of a two-part project that aims to create a more attractive area. In early spring 2006, the group will return to paint benches, plant native bushes and flowers and paint a mural on the adjacent flood wall.

[Read more...](#)

Entry Initiative programs in Missouri. PRI grants help reduce the rate of recidivism among ex-offenders by helping them find and keep employment. Half of the grant will aid 200 ex-offenders at Connections to Success in Kansas City, and half will help 200 ex-offenders at the St. Patrick Center in St. Louis. Beyond employment assistance, help is available with housing, mentoring, substance abuse treatment, etc.

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to lead the sequencing of the corn genome. Work should begin Dec. 1 on what will become the largest plant genome to be sequenced.

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[**Missouri General Assembly**](#)

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GLOBAL NEWS

Illinois Entrepreneurship Network



Illinois' IEN is the key to information and resources to help new and small businesses grow. The state has partnered with well-respected business development organizations and educational institutions to provide experts, networks, tools and other resources to transform businesses into appealing investments for lenders.

[Read more...](#)

Tennessee One-Stop Business Resource

The state of Tennessee unveiled a new online tool last week that will help simplify and streamline the new business start-up process. The Tennessee One-Stop Business Resource (OSBR) will allow businesses to process applications with multiple state agencies through the state's Web site and provide easy access to services like obtaining permits, licenses, certificates, tax numbers and even a new business name.

[Read more...](#)



University of Florida Economists Release Start-Up Guide



Professors at the University of Florida have created a small business start-up guide containing frequently asked questions. The guide also attempts to answer basic questions about financial alternatives, record keeping, marketing, business plans and an individual's readiness to own and operate a small business.

[Read more...](#)